

WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1 1. A multi-purpose combination ladder/cart assembly, comprising:
2 a first frame having side rails and support members disposed between said side
3 rails;
4 a second frame pivotally connected to said first frame, said second frame having
5 side rails and support members disposed between said side rails of said second frame;
6 said first and second frames being pivotally movable with respect to each other to
7 configure said assembly into at least one type of ladder configuration;
8 said first and second frames being further pivotally movable with respect to each
9 other into a closed position to configure said assembly into a cart configuration; and
10 a set of wheels connecting to the first frame capable of being arranged in a variety
11 of possible configurations in order to provide a variably selectable center of gravity for
12 said assembly in the cart configuration.

1 2. The multi-purpose combination ladder/cart assembly of claim 1, wherein
2 the center of gravity of said assembly in the cart configuration is capable of being
3 changed by changing the configuration of the set of wheels connected to said first frame.

1 3. The multi-purpose combination ladder/cart assembly of claim 2, wherein
2 each of the possible configurations of said set of wheels provides said assembly with
3 different traveling height and angle characteristics in the cart configuration.

1 4. The multi-purpose combination ladder/cart assembly of claim 3, wherein
2 said set of wheels includes a first set of smaller wheels attached to said first frame and a
3 second set of larger wheels attachable to said first set of smaller wheels, wherein a
4 particular number of said larger wheels are selected to be attached to a respective number
5 of smaller wheels in order to select the desired center of gravity for said cart
6 configuration.

1 5. The multi-purpose combination ladder/cart assembly of claim 1, further
2 comprising a handle frame pivotally connected to at least one of said first and second
3 frames,
4 wherein said handle frame is pivotally movable into a closed position to configure
5 said assembly into a dolly configuration,
6 further wherein said handle frame is pivotally movable into an open position to
7 configure the assembly into a pull cart configuration.

1 6. The multi-purpose combination ladder/cart assembly of claim 5, wherein
2 each of said first frame, said second frame, and said handle frame are pivotal about the
3 same pivotal axis.

1 7. The multi-purpose combination ladder/cart assembly of claim 4, further
2 comprising a handle frame pivotally connected to at least one of said first and second
3 frames,

4 wherein said handle frame is pivotally movable into a closed position to configure
5 said assembly into a dolly configuration, further wherein said handle frame is pivotally
6 movable into an open position to configure the assembly into a pull cart configuration;
7 said handle frame further comprising a storage area for storing said second set of
8 larger wheels.

1 8. The multi-purpose combination ladder/cart assembly of claim 4, wherein
2 said larger wheels are further matingly attachable to one another in order to form wheel
3 assemblies having widths wider than a width of a single larger wheel alone.

1 9. The multi-purpose combination ladder/cart assembly of claim 4, wherein
2 said smaller wheels do not interfere with the use of the assembly in any ladder
3 configuration.

1 10. The multi-purpose combination ladder/cart assembly of claim 1, further
2 comprising:
3 a third frame pivotally connected to said first frame about a pivotal axis;
4 wherein said set of wheels includes a first set of smaller wheels attached to said
5 first frame and a second set of larger wheels attached to two of said smaller wheels
6 adjacent to said pivotal axis of said third frame
7 said second frame being pivotally movable with respect to said first frame into an
8 opened position to configure said assembly into a hand truck configuration;

9 said third frame being pivotally movable to form an angle with respect to said first
10 frame for supporting a load in said hand truck configuration.

1 11. The multi-purpose combination ladder/cart assembly of claim 1, wherein
2 said ladder configurations include a step ladder configuration and an extension ladder
3 configuration.

1 12. The multi-purpose combination ladder/cart assembly of claim 1, further
2 comprising a groove formed in at least one surface of at least one of said steps for
3 containing a cord, wherein said cord can be utilized to retain an object being carried
4 against the assembly.

1 13. The multi-purpose combination ladder/cart assembly of claim 1, further
2 comprising:
3 a plurality of receptacle support members attachable to at least one of said first
4 and second frames on an opposite side of said assembly from said set of wheels, and
5 a receptacle capable of being attached to and supported by said receptacle support
6 members,
7 wherein said receptacle support members and said receptacle allow said assembly
8 to be utilized as a wagon when said assembly is configured in the cart configuration.

1 14. The multi-purpose combination ladder/cart assembly of claim 1, wherein
2 said support members on at least one of said first frame and said second frame are

3 substantially L-shaped, each L-shaped step having a foot supporting portion and a load
4 bearing portion extending there from, wherein said foot supporting portion bears the
5 weight of a user when said assembly is configured in a ladder configuration and said load
6 bearing portion assists in bearing a load carried by the assembly when configured in the
7 cart configuration.

1 15. The multi-purpose combination ladder/cart assembly of claim 14, wherein
2 said load bearing portions of said support members of one of said first and second frames
3 further mate with said support members from the other of said first and second frames
4 when said first and second frames are configured into the closed cart position in order to
5 provide a substantially flat carrying surface for objects.

1 16. A multi-purpose cart assembly having variable travel characteristics,
2 comprising:
3 a first frame having side rails and support members disposed between said side
4 rails;
5 a first set of smaller wheels connected to one side of said first frame; and
6 a second set of larger wheels attachable to said first set of smaller wheels in a
7 variety of different configurations, wherein travel characteristics of said cart assembly are
8 selected from a variety of possibilities by selecting a particular number of said larger
9 wheels from said second set of larger wheels to be attached to a respective number of
10 smaller wheels in order to provide the desired travel characteristics of said cart assembly.

1 17. The multi-purpose cart assembly of claim 16, wherein the travel
2 characteristics of said cart assembly controlled by the attachment of said larger wheels to
3 said smaller wheels include a height of the cart assembly and an angle of said first frame
4 with respect to a supporting surface.

1 18. The multi-purpose cart assembly of claim 16, wherein each possible
2 configuration of attaching said larger wheels to said smaller wheels provides a different
3 center of gravity for said cart assembly, wherein a desired center of gravity for said
4 assembly can be variably selected by selecting a respective configuration of attaching
5 said larger wheels to said smaller wheels.

1 19. The multi-purpose cart assembly of claim 16, further comprising a handle
2 frame pivotally connected to said first frame,
3 wherein said handle frame is pivotally movable into a closed position to configure
4 said assembly into a dolly configuration,
5 further wherein said handle frame is pivotally movable into an open position to
6 configure the assembly into a pull cart configuration.

1 20. The multi-purpose cart assembly of claim 19, wherein said handle frame
2 further comprises a storage area for storing said second set of larger wheels.

1 21. The multi-purpose cart assembly of claim 16, wherein said larger wheels
2 are further matingly attachable to one another in order to form wheel assemblies having
3 widths wider than a width of a single larger wheel alone.

1 22. The multi-purpose cart assembly of claim 16, further comprising:
2 a second frame pivotally connected to said first frame, said second frame having
3 side rails and support members disposed between said side rails of said second frame;
4 said first and second frames being pivotally movable with respect to each other to
5 further configure said assembly into at least one type of ladder configuration;
6 said first and second frames being further pivotally movable with respect to each
7 other into a closed position to configure said assembly into a cart configuration.

1 23. The multi-purpose cart assembly of claim 22, wherein said smaller wheels
2 do not interfere with the use of the assembly in any ladder configuration.

1 24. The multi-purpose cart assembly of claim 22, further comprising:
2 a third frame pivotally connected to said first frame about a pivotal axis;
3 wherein said second set of larger wheels are attached to two of said smaller
4 wheels adjacent to said pivotal axis of said third frame
5 said second frame being pivotally movable with respect to said first frame into an
6 opened position to further configure said assembly into a hand truck configuration;

7 said third frame being pivotally movable to form an angle with respect to said first
8 frame for supporting a load in said hand truck configuration.

1 25. The multi-purpose cart assembly of claim 22, wherein said ladder
2 configurations include a step ladder configuration and an extension ladder
3 configuration. The multi-purpose cart assembly of claim 16, further comprising a groove
4 formed in at least one surface of at least one of said support members for containing a
5 cord, wherein said cord can be utilized to retain an object being carried against the
6 assembly.

1 26. The multi-purpose cart assembly of claim 16, further comprising:
2 a plurality of receptacle support members attachable to said first frame on an
3 opposite side of said assembly from said set of wheels, and
4 a receptacle capable of being attached to and supported by said receptacle support
5 members,
6 wherein said receptacle support members and said receptacle allow said assembly
7 to be utilized as a wagon.

1 27. The multi-purpose cart assembly of claim 22, wherein said support
2 members on at least one of said first frame and said second frame are substantially L-
3 shaped, each L-shaped step having a foot supporting portion and a load bearing portion
4 extending there from, wherein said foot supporting portion bears the weight of a user
5 when said assembly is configured in a ladder configuration and said load bearing portion

6 assists in bearing a load carried by the assembly when configured in the cart
7 configuration.

1 28. The multi-purpose cart assembly of claim 28, wherein said load bearing
2 portions of said support members of one frame further mate with said support members
3 from the other frame when said first and second frames are configured into the closed
4 cart position in order to provide a substantially flat carrying surface for objects.